The reason for actual industrial growth during 8th Plan falling marginaly behind the target was mainly because of slowdown in investment and inadequate availabillity of infrastructure.

(d) The target of industrial growth for the Ninth Plan is yet to be finalised by the Planning Commission.

Selection of Professionals for Navratna PSUs

62. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Search Committee formed by Government has selected professionals for the boards of the Navratna public sector undertakings;

(b) if so, whether Government have accepted the recommendations; and

(c) if not, by when these appointments will be cleared by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL): (a) Yes; Sir.

(b) In respect of 5 Navratna PSEs, Government has approved the appointment of four non-official directors each.

(c) The proceess of induction of non-official directors in the remaining six Navratna PSEs is in progress and appointments will be made as soon as the requisite formalities are competed.

Board level changes in Navratna PSUs

63. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that of the even Navratna public sector undertakings only three have actuay seen changes in their boards;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that due to non effecting any change in the Boards, the companies have not been able to move ahead with their investment pans under the Navratna Policy; and

(d) by when Government propose to bring in the necessary changes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL): (a) Yes; Sir.

(b) and (d) Government has approved the appointment of non-official directors on the Boards of two other Navratna PSEs also. In the remaining six PSEs the process of induction of non-official directors is in progress and appointments will be made on completion of the requisite formalities.

(c) Yes; Sir.

Sluggish Industrial Production

64. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the industrial production during the current fiscal year continues to remain sluggish;

(b) whether the packages announced by Government thus for have failed to stimulate industrial activity; and

(c) if so, what further steps are contemplated to accelerate the pace of industrial activity?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) The industrial growth during the current financial year 1998-99 for the period April-September is 3.6% as compared to 6.0% during corresponding period of the previous year shows a slowdown in production.

(b) The slowdown in industrial growth can be attributed to both the domestic and exernal factors. Domestic factors include weak demand on account of inadeequate investment in infrastructure sectors, like power, ports and transport, and slow down in general investment mainly due to capital market conditions and partly due to corporate restructuring in some industries in order to become internationally competitive. On the external side, the export growth has been negative which has been aggravated by fall in world exports.

The demand has been slackening for basic good like steel, cement, commercial vehicles, capital goods as well as consumer durables. This has resulted in cut back of production by the industries and build-up of inventories.